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tion Law of 1651 is absolutely wrong, probably because he never saw the full text in Scobell. Then, when speaking of the policy of "enumeration," Mr. Egerton mentions, as if in palliation of it, that grain was not included among the articles that had to be shipped to England. He seemingly fails to understand that, above all, England wanted to keep out colonial agricultural products which competed with her own industries. It was no benefit to the colonists to be able to export their surplus products of the soil to foreign countries, since legally no manufactures could be taken back on the home voyage. In fact, it would have been of great benefit to the colonies if wheat had been enumerated. Ultimately England, and civilization in general also, might in that case have been benefited, for then the American Revolution might have been averted.

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GEORGE LOUIS BEER.

L'Évolution du commerce dans les diverses races humaines.

Par CH. LETOURNEAU. Paris, Vigot Frères, 1897. — xxiii, 581 pp.

Professor Letourneau's present work on the evolution of commerce is in continuation and further elaboration of his former books on the origin and development of property and on the evolution of slavery. The range of this volume is perhaps even broader than that of the works the author has already published on the evolution of various social institutions, and there appears to be no race of men whose trade and commerce are not in some way described.

Professor Letourneau does not find Adam Smith's "propensity in human nature to truck, barter and exchange" existent among the lower races of man. So long as men lived in "anarchic hordes" and "communal clans," there was no incentive to exchange, as the only private property consisted in weapons and utensils which were invariably burned or buried with their owner upon his death. Survivals of this "pre-commercial age" — which, according to the author, lasted many generations — are to be found among the primitive Fuegians, Hottentots and some of the lower American Indians.

Professor Letourneau agrees with Herbert Spencer in thinking that commerce originated in the exchange of presents between savages. Out of this custom grew the widespread practice of trading through "depots," where one tribe set out what it had to exchange, and then withdrew until another tribe appeared and placed what it regarded as equivalent alongside. If the former tribe was satisfied, an exchange was effected — without the party of the first part having

any view of or conversation with the party of the second part. From this system developed the primitive market, held between armed groups, where the exchanges were effected by specially appointed agents, enjoying certain immunities for the time.

But little advance was made, however, until the trading tribes acquired some form of capital in the way of slaves, cattle or agricultural produce. Industry and specialization followed; and, once implanted, the "propensity to truck and barter" seems to have grown very rapidly among all higher savages. More advanced tribes then encouraged the lower to give them slaves in exchange for articles of adornment, and the market became a feature of inter-tribal relations. The necessity of some recognized standard of value was everywhere felt, and some common articles of trade—ornaments, stuffs, slaves, cattle, salt or the like—were eventually chosen to serve this end. Commerce was thereby immensely facilitated, but this transition from what Aristotle called the "natural" to the "unnatural economy" produced, according to our author, an evil effect upon the morality of the race. The primitive clan was thereby dismembered, and the ancient feeling of solidarity gave way to the unrestrained egoism of the individual. Thus the germs of modern commercialism are to be found among primitive savages, and the subsequent development of the mercantile instinct among barbarians and civilized peoples has tended only to accentuate the evil effects upon morality thus originally produced.

Regarding the development from the standpoint of social ethics, Professor Letourneau arraigns the nations of history before the bar of morality, and finds them all guilty of rapine and exploitation. With the development of capital and the introduction of coined money, inequality increased, the evil effects of usury were accentuated, the masses were exploited by the few and weaker races fell before the strong. Yet civilization has sanctioned it all and idealized the commercial instinct. Nor does the author believe the conditions have been much improved by the modern development of commercialism. Facts, he says, have disproved Mill's optimistic belief that commerce makes for peace; and, though he does not take up the gauntlet directly, apparently his arguments would likewise hold against the theories of Comte and Spencer in favor of modern industrialism as an educational force. In short, Professor Letourneau stands fairly upon the Aristotelian ground, that commerce is rightly a means to a moral end and not an end in itself. The human race has erred thus far in making wealth the aim in life; but the author

—an optimist himself—sees at work forces which are making for virtue; and in the “confederation of republican cities,” which are eventually to take the place of our present over-large “centralized states,” the commercial instinct is to be disciplined and made to play its proper part.

But, though the evolution of commerce has brought with it this train of evils, commerce itself is by no means to be decried. As the author puts it, “*Le commerce! Qui le pourrait assez louer ou stigmatiser? C’est un malfaiteur plein de vertu.*” Does not the difficulty, then, lie in attempting to judge from two points of view at once? From the standpoint of production commerce has certainly made material civilization possible, but from the point of view of distribution it has undoubtedly accentuated the inequality of wealth. In looking primarily to the evil effects, Professor Letourneau fails to take due regard of the good; and his judgment in favor of the natural economy of the doubtful past and the distant future is, accordingly, as one-sided as those of Aristotle and Rousseau, who regarded the matter with much the same bias.

With the ethical thread which runs through the centre of the present work there are interwoven many interesting and instructive lines of economic investigation, particularly in regard to the commercial relations of various savage races. The whole material is admirably arranged for ready reference, and is accompanied by a careful summary at the head of each chapter and a complete index. The volume is a solid addition to the author’s previous works on social evolution, and is in perfect keeping with his general theory of sociology.

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Recht und Sitte auf den verschiedenen wirtschaftlichen Kulturstufen. Von DR. RICHARD HILDEBRAND. Erster Teil. Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1896.—191 pp.

Whether it was a conscious impulse of filial piety which prompted the choice of Professor Hildebrand’s subject, we are not told. But it is certainly appropriate that the son of that Bruno Hildebrand who, fifty years ago, pointed to “the movement of historical evolution” as the object of the economist’s inquiry, should now make an attempt, with the aid of all that anthropology and comparative jurisprudence have given us in the interval, actually to sketch the outlines of that evolution, and to show its dependence upon funda-